

# Grove Field Environmental Assessment Advisory Committee (EAAC)

## Meeting #1 Summary

October 7, 2008

Airport Tour: 5:00 – 6:00 p.m.

Meeting: 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.

### Attendees:

**EAAC Members:** Dave Luse, Doug Anderson, Jim Ludwig, Linda S. Busch Pfeifle, Lynn Johnston, Mike Reinhart, Pete Capell, Phil Bourquin, and Richard Hamby

**Port of Camas-Washougal:** David Ripp, Scot Walstra, and Mary Murphy

**WHPacific, Inc:** Rainse Anderson and Sarah Lucas

**Corvid Consulting:** Laura Jackson

**General Public:** Sally Luse, Paul Cannon, Jared Adams, and Jim Metzger

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<b>Optional Airport Tour</b>	The airport tour highlighted the proposed actions that will be evaluated in the Environmental Assessment (EA): runway/taxiway separation, runway length, runway width, existing and future object free area penetration, and the need for additional land to accommodate these improvements.
<b>Welcome and Introductions</b>	David Ripp and Rainse Anderson welcomed all EAAC members and the public to the meeting.
<b>Project Overview and History</b>	<p>Scot Walstra gave an in-depth review of the project's history and purpose. An Airport Layout Plan (ALP) was recently prepared for Grove Field (Airport), which is a long-term guide that outlines how physical development of an airport can satisfy aviation demand in a safe, efficient, and fiscally responsible manner. The ALP identified several projects, including those previously listed, that are needed to bring the Airport up to Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) design standards for safety.</p> <p>The Port of Camas-Washougal (Port) is eligible for FAA funding. However, the Port has not previously accepted FAA funds due to the FAA's grant assurances that obligate the Port for 20 years after accepting funding. The FAA has allowed an exception for the EA and is funding 95% of the project. The Port and Washington Department of Transportation – Aviation Division (WSDOT), are equally splitting the remaining 5%. At the end of the EA process, the Port Commission will decide whether or not the Port will implement the proposed projects and accept construction funding from the FAA, which will thereby obligate the Port to the FAA's grant assurances.</p>

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**EAAC Roles and Responsibilities**

Rainse Anderson discussed the EAAC's roles and responsibilities throughout the EA process.

The role of the EAAC is essential to the process and is needed to gain insight from different perspectives. While the EAAC is strictly advisory, participation will generate a better product.

Responsibilities requested of the EAAC are meeting participation and representation among peers. Members of the EAAC are encouraged to relay what they have learned at the meetings with others, and bring forth questions and concerns they hear from others.

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**Environmental Assessment Process**

Laura Jackson reviewed the EA process, which she previously discussed in detail at the September 9<sup>th</sup> Public Information Meeting. The EA will be developed to meet the FAA's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Washington's State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). The EA will focus on potential impacts to the natural and built environments. For more details of what categories are reviewed, please refer to the meeting summary posted from the September 9<sup>th</sup> meeting.

The action that has the greatest potential to impact the natural and built environments is the relocation of Delp Road. Rainse Anderson presented four alternatives for the relocation:

- Alternative #1 – Relocate as shown in the ALP
- Alternative #2 – Relocate Delp Road to intersect with 252<sup>nd</sup> Street
- Alternative #3 – Keep relocation completely on Port property, joining back with Delp Road just north of the Airport
- Alternative #4 – Relocate Delp Road to join back with Delp Road, southeast of 252<sup>nd</sup> Street

Other alternatives to be studied in the EA include tunneling below the runway and taxiway, and road closure.

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**Results of Field Investigations**

Laura Jackson and Sarah Lucas discussed the findings of the field investigations.

- Wetlands and other waters – Four areas were identified: 1) stormwater detention basin; 2) stormwater swales A and B; 3) stormwater ditch; and 4) unnamed stream and associated riparian wetlands. The unnamed stream and associated riparian wetlands are under state and federal jurisdiction, while a Jurisdictional Determination will be requested of the Corps of Engineers along with submittal of the delineation report for the other three areas.
- Cultural Resources Report – A cultural resource records review, pedestrian archaeological survey, and subsurface probing resulted in the identification of no archaeological resources and no historic-period aboveground structures. The brick house to the southwest of the Airport will be further researched to determine its historic

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significance.

- Biological Resources Technical Report – It was concluded through on-site reconnaissance, review of available agency biological data and subsequent discussion with the Washington Department of Natural Resources and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, that the project area does not appear to contain or provide suitable habitat for any state or federally-listed plants or fish. Of federally-listed wildlife, only the Mazama pocket gopher was identified as having potentially suitable habitat located in the project area.

Once the field investigation reports are reviewed by the Port and FAA, they will be posted on the EA's project website.

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## Open Discussion

**Johnston Farm:** A portion of the Johnston Farm property, located to the west of the Airport and inside the Runway Protection Zone, was identified in the ALP for aviation easements. Due to zoning changes on the Johnston property, the FAA is now recommending the property be purchased by the Port to ensure the safety of people and property on the ground. Since Lynn Johnston is a member of the EAAC, it was suggested that this issue not be discussed during the EAAC meetings. Mr. Johnston said he did not mind it being discussed, as impacts to adjacent private property will be a reoccurring theme. Phil Bourquin said the City would have concern over the loss of employment if the land was purchased by the Port and that the City would need to look at the significance of such action. Of the approximate 500 acres in the Johnston Farm area, approximately 5.5 acres are in the Runway Protection Zone that would be considered for acquisition and of that only 2.3 acres would be impacted as developable land.

**Zoning v. Overlay:** Scot Walstra explained the difference between the Airport Environs Overlay and Airport Zoning. The Airport Environs Overlay is not a type of zoning, rather a departmental review to ensure developments will not interfere with the Airport's airspace or be a distraction to pilots (*i.e.*, bright lights, smoke). Several two-story buildings have recently been reviewed and approved in the Airport Environs Overlay.

**Delp Road:** Mr. Johnston asked if safety will be discussed. Rainse Anderson and Pete Capell reassured that it will be.

**Impetus of EA:** Doug Anderson asked what started the process and what the expected benefit to the community and the return on investment would be.

Scot Walstra said the project was brought on by safety concerns, regional airport closures, potential fixed-base operations (FBOs) on-site, and emergency benefits (*i.e.*, only airport in region not in 100-year floodplain).

Lynn Johnston contended it was important for the EAAC to understand the proposed improvements have nothing to do with capacity and are not

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needed to continue airport operations. He also added that not all safety concerns will be met through this process. Dave Luse reiterated; however, that safety is an issue at the Airport. Rainse Anderson reminded everyone the ALP identified safety improvements needed over the next 20 years and that this is just the first step in correcting the safety deficiencies at the Airport.

Mary Murphy relayed the reason the ALP was updated was a result of WSDOT policy change. Previously, WSDOT had funded Airport improvements without a current ALP, but had changed their policy to state that Airports must have an ALP to prioritize improvements. Project funding used to be split 50/50 between the Port and WSDOT. If the Port becomes an obligated airport the FAA will fund 95% of improvements, with the remaining 5% split between the Port and WSDOT.

**Definitions:** Phil Bourquin asked if the technical definitions, like object free area, were defined anywhere. They are defined in FAA advisory circulars, and are also available in the ALP's Appendix A.

**Annexation:** Mike Reinhart asked if the Airport is going to be annexed. Phil Bourquin said no, and that the Airport is not even in the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB).

**Airport Revenue:** Linda Busch Pfeifle asked what revenue was created at the Airport. According to a study conducted by WSDOT the Airport's economic impact is \$1.586 million. The Port; however, does not have a large bottom line.

**Fuel Sales:** It was asked how much of the Port's fuel sales are accounted to transient aircraft, and how well fuel sales are doing in general. The Port did not have this information handy, but does have it available at their offices if people have specific inquiries.

**Aircraft Operations:** Aircraft operations are estimated, since the Airport is uncontrolled and there isn't anybody there to record actual operations.

**Land Use Compatibility:** There was a lengthy discussion over land use compatibility, with examples of how other airports did and didn't plan for compatible land use. In general, it was discussed that it is best to have a proactive approach to compatibility to protect the Airport even if there is no expansion.

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**Future Meeting Dates and Times**

Tuesday evenings seemed to work well for all EAAC members. The next meeting was set for December 9<sup>th</sup> from 6:00-7:30 pm, location TBD.

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm.